IN THE SPECIFICATIONS

Please replace the paragraphs beginning at page 4, line 8, which starts with "Another object", with the following amended paragraphs:

---Another object of the present invention is to provide a tilt steering apparatus ~~for vehicle, having~~ for a vehicle having a physical constitution that can improve the operability or efficiency of the work of manufacture by minimizing the operational load on a tilt lever.

Still another object of the present invention is to provide a tilt steering apparatus ~~for vehicle, having~~ for a vehicle having a physical constitution that can improve the supporting rigidity and abrasion resistance of a tilt lock mechanism overall.---

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 5, line 6, which starts with "Preferably, a hook", with the following amended paragraph:

---Preferably, a hook piece is further mounted on the wedge Preferably, a hook piece is further mounted on the wedge ~~member, to~~ member to encompass a lower end side of the movable gear. As a result, the operational load on the tilt lever can be minimized, and the operability thereof can also be enhanced.---

Please replace the paragraphs beginning at page 9, line 17, which starts with "The lower column", with the following amended paragraphs:

---The lower column member 15 is composed of a column main body 28 and a

cylindrical portion 29 in one body. The cylindrical portion 29 includes a support portion 29a that supports the cylindrical portion 29 to be inserted in the upper bracket 240. To this end, the tilt shaft 25 is embedded in the support portion 29a. The column main body 28, on the other hand, is fixed to an instrument panel (not shown) of a vehicle through a mounting portion (not shown). The entire lower column member 15, through a bearing (not shown), supports the lower steering shaft 12 to make it pivotably move. Also, the upper column member 140 and the lower column member 15 are interconnected to each other by a spring 106. Because of this spring 106, a spring force is applied to the fore part ~~f~~ of the upper column member 140 against the lower column member 15, centering around the tilt shaft 25. This spring force is supposed to facilitate the adjustment of steering wheel's height by offsetting the weights of the upper steering shaft 11, the upper column member 140, and the steering wheel.

Major components of the tilt lock mechanism 160 include a fixed gear 31 attached to the lower column member 15, a movable gear ~~320~~ 32 attached to the upper column member 140, a carrier screw bar 330, an operating member 340 for rotating the carrier screw bar 330, a pin 26, and a female screw 250.---

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 10, line 13, which starts with "The movable gear", with the following amended paragraph:

---The movable gear ~~320~~ 32 is another member on the block, whose upper end side is pivotably movable by the pin 26 that is embedded in the upper column member 140. A movable toothed portion 32a to be engaged with the fixed toothed portion 31a is formed on the front surface of this block 320. Also, a tilt protrusion 32b is formed on the rear end side of the movable gear.---

Please replace the paragraphs beginning at page 11, line 24, which starts with "At first,", with the following amended paragraphs:

---At first, as depicted in Figs. 5a and 5b, the fixed gear 31 and the movable gear 32 are disengaged from each other by the applied pressure to the wedge member 171. That is to say, if the tilt lever 175 is pulled toward the steering wheel mounting portion 11a, as shown in Fig. 6a, it gets pivoted counter-clockwise upon the lateral axis ~~341a~~ 172. Following this pivoting tilt lever ~~341~~ 175, the wedge member 171 and the hook piece 173 rotate as well. Then the protrusion 171a is freed from the pressure, and the hook piece 173 covers the tilt protrusion 32b and pulls it. In this way, the fixed toothed portion 31a of the fixed gear 31 and the movable toothed portion 32a of the movable gear 320 are disengaged from each other. Once their lock is released, the upper column member 140 can be tilted toward the lower column member 14, and it gets much easier to adjust the height of the steering wheel.

When the tilt lever ~~341~~ 175 is released after the steering wheel is set at an

appropriate height, the tilt lever is rotated clockwise by the elastic spring 174, and the wedge member 171 and the hook piece 173 return to their original positions. In other words, the hook piece 173 is separated from the tilt protrusion 32b, and the protrusion 171a presses the movable gear 32. As a result, the movable gear 32 moves upwardly. In this manner, the fixed gear 31 and the movable gear 32 are toothed to each other, being tilt locked (refer to Figs. 5a and 5b). In this state, the upper column member 140 is locked to the lower column member 15, and the adjustment of the steering wheel's height is completed.---

Please replace the paragraphs beginning at page 11, line 24, which starts with "At first,", with the following amended paragraphs:

---To ensure that the wedge piece 171' makes the line contact with the plate 180' and is not split from the plate 180', it is preferable to install an additional locking member. The locking member, as shown in Fig. ~~8a~~ 8, includes a female screw 171c' mounted on the wedge piece 171', a locking plate 183' mounted on the center of the plate 180', and a bolt 185' to be locked with the female screw 171c'. At this time, a horizontally elongated hole ~~183'~~ 183a' is punched on the locking plate ~~183'~~ 183a'. This long hole ~~183'~~ 183a' is primarily for helping the rotation of the wedge piece 171' in the horizontal direction, and thus keeping the line contact.---